

Message Text

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46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-10

NSAE-00 PA-02 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 NSC-05 OMB-01 EB-07 /086 W

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R 071820Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8523

SECDEF

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

UNCLAS LONDON 19763

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, MILI, AWACS, UK

SUBJECT: UK PRESS REPORTING ON AWACS

REF: LONDON 19677

1. THE BRITISH QUALITY PRESS AGAIN PICKS UP THE NATO AEW ISSUE AND TWO PAPERS, FINANCIAL TIMES AND THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, PUBLISH ARTICLES ON THE LIKELY OUTCOME OF TOMORROW'S DPC MEETING. MALCOLM RUTHERFORD (FINANCIAL TIMES) UNDER THE TITLE "UK READY TO DROP NIMROD" AND AIR CDRE. DONALDSON (TELEGRAPH) UNDER THE TITLE "NATO LIKELY TO CHOOSE US WARNING SYSTEM" WRITE FAIRLY OPTIMISTICALLY THAT AWACS IS LIKELY TO BE SELECTED. BRITISH SUPPORT FOR AWACS IS NOTED WITHOUT COMMENT AND THE IMPLICATION OF THIS FOR NIMROD (LOSS OF A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF JOBS AT HAWKER SIDDELEY AVIATION) IS TREATED IN LOW KEY. RUTHERFORD NOTES THAT SINCE THE MONEY FOR AN AEW SYSTEM "...IS ALREADY IN THE BRITISH DEFENSE BUDGET, IT IS HOPED THAT A COMMITMENT TO AWACS COULD GO AHEAD WITHOUT BEING AFFECTED BY CUTS IN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES."

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2. RUTHERFORD ALSO TOUCHES ON THE QUESTION OF THE BENE-

FITS OF POSSIBLE FRENCH PARTICIPATION, OBSERVING THAT IF THE FRENCH JOIN "...THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT INVOLVED IS LIKELY TO GO UP AND THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS TO COME DOWN. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THE FRENCH WILL MAKE THEIR DECISION KNOWN IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS..."

ARMSTRONG

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NNN

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